

Malmstrom, Vandenberg, Schriever capture top space and missile awards

GC public affairs

Space wings from Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mont., Vandenberg AFB, Calif., and Schriever AFB, Colo., captured the top honors at Guardian Challenge, Air Force Space Command's annual space warfighter competition held here Monday through Thursday.

Throughout the week nearly 200 competitors vied for top in several space and missile disciplines, including missile combat operations, satellite operations, remote space tracking, security forces, helicopter operations, food services, spacelift and missile maintenance and communications, and missile codes.

When final scores were announced, the 341st Space Wing at Malmstrom AFB walked away with the prestigious Blanchard Trophy for best Air Force ICBM wing. The 30th Space Wing here captured the Schriever Trophy as outstanding space launch wing, while the 50th Space Wing from Schriever AFB won the Aldridge Trophy for the best space operations wing.

"It's important to compete," said AFSPC Commander Gen. Lance Lord in his keynote address to the approximately 975 people at the closing ceremony today. "It hones our skills and brings us together as a family."

The only space and missile competition in the Air Force, Guardian Challenge pits the best space warfighters in the command against each other, determining the top space and missile teams in the Air Force.

Functional area winners included: space operations crew, 1st Space Operations Squadron, 50th SW, Schriever AFB; spacelift operations crew, 30th SW; spacelift maintenance, 30th SW; space communications, 50th SW; missile operations crew, S-143, 90th SW; missile code controllers, 91st SW; missile communications, 90th SW; missile maintenance, 91st SW; security forces, 90th SW; helicopter aircraft generation/reconfiguration, 90th SW; chefs, 21st SW.

Guardian Challenge, celebrating its 35th anniversary this year, began in 1967 as the Strategic Air Command missile combat competition, Curtain Raiser. Thirty-four years, three name changes and many event additions later, the competition's focus remains the same - to evaluate AFSPC's readiness and demonstrate the command's warfighting skills.

The weeklong competition improves readiness and combat capabilities through preparation, innovation and sharing; enhances esprit de corps; and strengthens teamwork across all mission areas in the command.

Competing units included the 21st Space Wing from Peterson AFB, Colo.; the 30th Space Wing from Vandenberg AFB, Calif.; the 45th Space Wing from Patrick AFB, Fla.; the 50th Space Wing and 310th Space Group from Schriever AFB, Colo.; the 90th Space Wing from F.E. Warren AFB, Wyo.; the 91st Space Wing from Minot AFB, N.D.; the 341st Space Wing from Malmstrom AFB, Mont.; and the 460th Air Base Wing from Buckley AFB, Colo. Also, Royal Air Force members from RAF Fylingdales, United Kingdom, participated with the 21st Space Wing.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeanette Copeland
The 50th SW poses with the Aldridge Trophy.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeanette Copeland
The 30th SW poses with the Schriever Trophy



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeanette Copeland
The 341st SW poses with their Blanchard Trophy.

Behind the Scenes

30th CS "Foto Phreaks"

UNIT: 30th Communications Squadron "Foto Phreaks"

GC ROLE: The photography team of the 30th CS was responsible for documenting the competition events and activities. A team of 13 photographers took more than 5000 pictures for this publication, the Guardian Challenge Web site, and the interactive compact disk that will be distributed later.



Photo by Aaron Taubman

Guardians of the High Frontier

Minuteman missiles sit silent
With noses pointed high
Many, across the world
Don't even understand why

They don't do parades
Nor fly in formation
Yet they're always on stanby
To protect this great nation

These guardians stand vigilant
Throughout every year
So our citizens, one and all
Can live without fear

They stand in deterrence
Facing nations of power

Diligent and secure
Throughout every hour

Safe without question
Always on call
Maintained by the best
Ready! One and all

Hour after hour, unsung heroes
Toil diligently day after day
Operators, Maintainers, Security Forces
Devoted troops, leading the way

Throughout all the seasons
Day and night
Sacrifices and commitment
Are the normal sight

They're not on the front lines
But they're doing their share
In defending this nation
From the threats out there

So remember in your prayers
As you lay down to sleep
The ones who secure
And the ones who up-keep

If you come to the North
You'll find them all here
These Guardians of
The High Frontier

By 1st Lt. Mike Cloyd
91st Space Wing

Guardian Challenge 2002

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